



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Substance Misuse Prevention in the Commonwealth

Massachusetts Health Officers Association Conference

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Andy Robinson

Lead Program Coordinator

Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) Prevention Unit

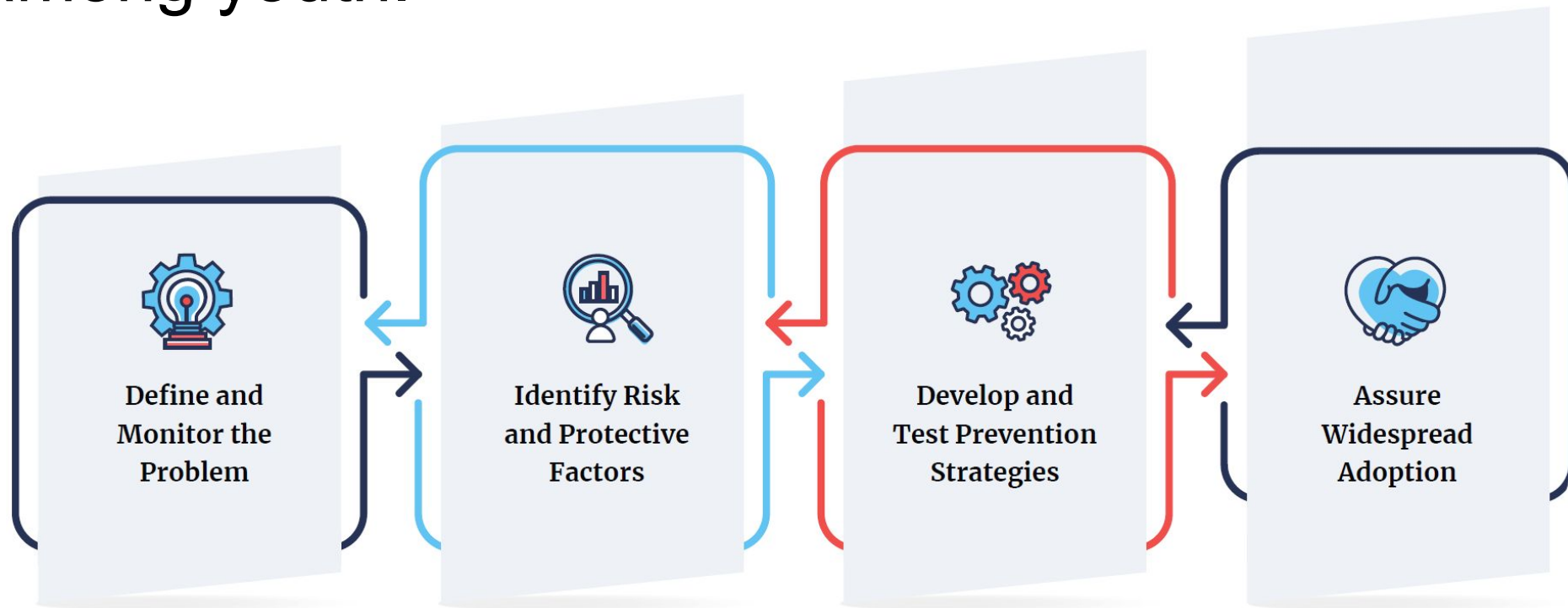
BSAS Prevention Unit: Vision

Substance use prevention is like a house that our entire community is working to construct, building a strong and lasting foundation of lifelong health and well-being for Massachusetts. To fortify this foundation, we use the tools and practices of prevention science, anticipating and counteracting potential risks and reinforcing effective protections.



BSAS Prevention Unit: Mission

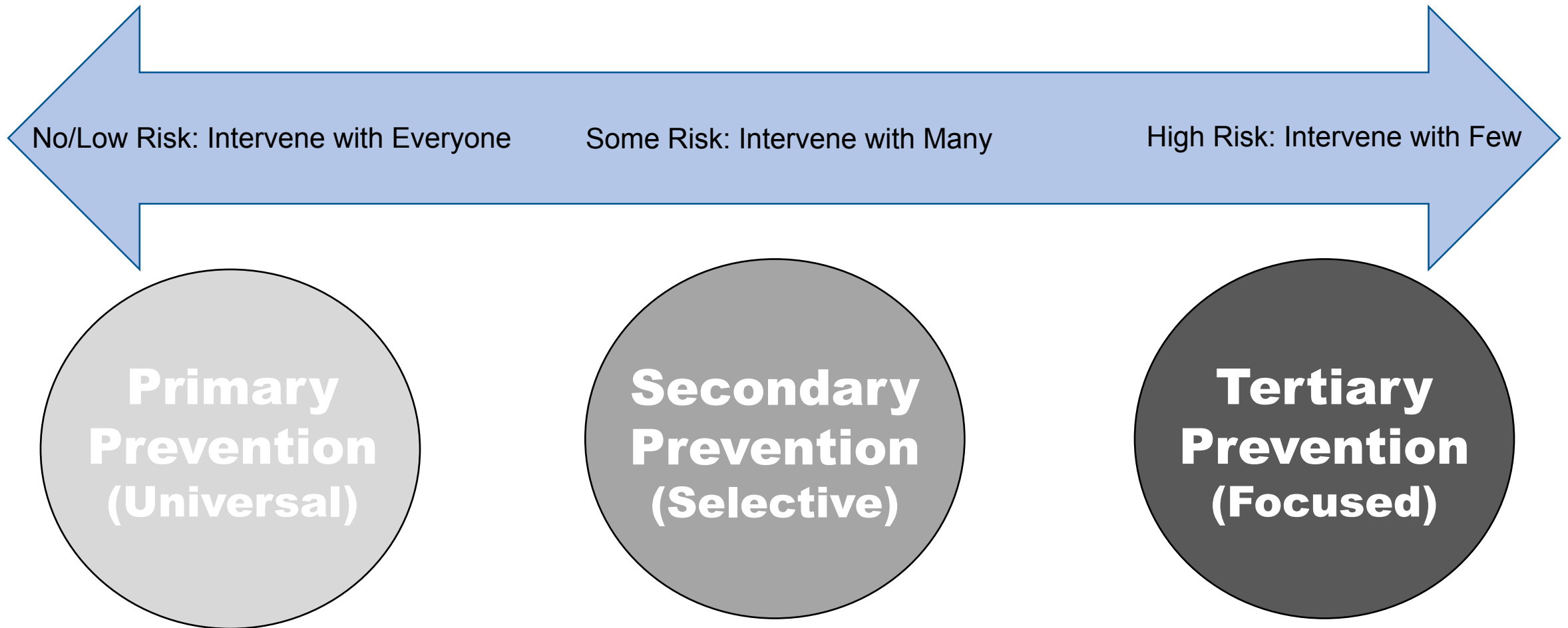
We empower communities using a public health approach to promote and support healthy decisions around substance use among youth.



BSAS Prevention Unit: Objectives

1. Promote a **public health approach** to empower communities.
2. Enhance **local prevention infrastructure** to enable healthy decisions around substance use through guidance, support, and technical assistance to those who receive our funding.
3. Support the development of a **comprehensive prevention plan** using SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), which is an evidence-based framework that provides community members with guidance around thoughtful planning, implementation, and evaluation of community prevention strategies.

Defining and Understanding Prevention



Defining and Understanding Prevention

	Primary Prevention
Method	Proactive/Universal
Timeline	Implemented prior to and with the goal of preventing harm from taking place as the result of substance misuse
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decrease risk factors• Increase protective factors• Promote healthy behaviors• Establish policies that enable and empower health
Focus	Individuals, families, communities, environments
Goals	Promote health, prevent misuse, create the conditions that support health

Defining and Understanding Prevention

	Secondary Prevention
Method	Responsive/Selective
Timeline	Implemented in response to a specific emerging need with the goal of reducing the likelihood of experiencing more significant harm over time as the results of substance misuse.
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addresses more specified need• Implementation of risk-reduction strategies• Support bystander response
Focus	Individuals, families, communities
Goals	Promote health, address misuse in ways that prevent harm

Defining and Understanding Prevention

	Tertiary Prevention
Method	Responsive/Focused
Timeline	Implemented in response to the needs of individuals experiencing the most significant impacts of substance misuse.
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crisis Intervention• Implementation of harm-reduction strategies• Treatment• Other acute supports
Focus	Individuals, families
Goals	Promote health, intervene to reduce harm, provide treatment

Substance Misuse Prevention in the Commonwealth

SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)



Our Approach

- Strength/asset-based
- **Centered on relationship, responsive to community need, and restorative in nature**
- Prevention strategies will be:
 - ✓ **Data-informed**
 - ✓ **Culturally responsive**
 - ✓ **Evidence-informed**
 - ✓ **Sustainable**

Programming Principles

This critical work should embrace the following programming principles:

- **Racial Equity**
- **Trauma-informed service provision**
- **Positive Youth Development**
- **Intersectionality**
- **Cultural Humility**
- **Restorative Justice**
- **Collective Impact**
- **Build and sustain the leadership of people of color**

BSAS Prevention Grant Programs

- Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning (MassCALL3) – Substance Use and Prevention Block Grant
 - Part A – Capacity Building (3)
 - Part B – Implementation (35)
 - Part C – Innovation (3)
- State Opioid Response – Prevention In Early Childhood (SOR-PEC, 15)
- SPF-Rx – Assessment and Planning
- Special Projects (MIAA, YMCA, B&G Club, Wander, LifeSkills and Good Behavior Game Training, MA Clearinghouse, DESE Pilot Program)

BSAS Prevention Grant Programs



60

Grant-Funded
Programs



200+

Unique
Municipalities

Community/Grantee Support

- **Strategic Prevention Support/Technical Assistance:** BSAS funds the Center for Strategic Prevention Support Services (CSPS) at Education Development Center (EDC) provides grant-specific assistance, resources, and support to MassCALL3 and SOR-PEC prevention grantees.
- **Evaluation Support:** BSAS funds Social Science Research & Evaluation, Inc. (SSRE) to provide grant-specific evaluation assistance and support to BSAS prevention grantees and conducts periodic assessments of the prevention system to inform continuous quality improvement

Program Implementation/Community Strategies

1. Environmental Strategies and Policies
2. Prevention Education
3. Information Dissemination/Communication
4. Community-Based Process

Environmental Strategies and Policies

Sample Prevention Strategies:

- **Commercial Access** of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
Examples: server training for bar and restaurant staff; ID check training and supporting materials for liquor store staff
- Municipal **Regulation, Ordinance, and Policy** Development
Examples: tiered penalties for noncompliance; zoning to control outlet density; advertising restrictions
- **School Policies** for Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
Examples: changing/adjusting suspension policies related to substance use; offering alcohol alternative activities; peer leadership programs; utilizing other DPH resources such as the 84.org
- **Social Access** of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
Examples: sticker shock; party patrols; social host ordinance enforcement; keg registration

Prevention Education

Sample Prevention Strategies:

- **Evidence-Based Curricula**

Examples: LifeSkills Training; Good Behavior Game Program; AlcoholEdu; other integration of evidence-based curricula

- **Parent Workshops**

Examples: Convening parents prior to/around school events such as Homecoming, New Years, Prom, Graduation, and Athletics/Extra Curricular (via MIAA)

Information Dissemination/Communication

Sample Prevention Strategies:

- **Social Marketing** Campaigns

Examples: Importance of Talking to your Kids about Alcohol and Other Drugs (Tips); increasing awareness of existing, laws, policies, and potential penalties; safe storage/disposal Information for Rx medications, alcohol, and other drugs

- **Social Norms** Campaigns

Examples: promotion of a community's positive social norms (e.g., highlighting the high percentage of community youth who choose not to drink); addressing harmful community perceptions (e.g., providing a "safe" place for youth to drink in homes is a "responsible" alternative); promoting pro-social norms (the benefit of family dinner, setting expectations and consequences for substance use, beginning conversations about healthy decisions around substances early/young)

Community-Based Process

Sample Prevention Strategy:

- Building **Coalition Capacity**

Examples: use of comprehensive strategic planning tools such SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework; providing training around use evidence-based practice, and data collection and analysis; promotion of the Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) certification

Wisdom of Practice/Community Considerations

- Overall rates of youth substance use are trending down and have been for some time.
- Prevention is a science and should be honored as such
- There are seldom quick or easy solutions
 - *The benefits of effective prevention work are realized over time*
- The most effective decisions are always guided by data (qualitative, quantitative, lived experience)
- Engage a diverse group of relevant stakeholders in decision making
 - *Diverse perspectives allow for informed, creative, and responsive solutions*

Prevention Best Practice

- **Strength-based approaches are more effective in the long run**
 - Build knowledge, develop skills, empower through positive frames and a strength-based approach
- **Make the healthy choice the easy choice**
 - Consider policies or practices that impact the environment in which youth live, work, and play
- **Language is important** — Consider whether stigma may be result of your efforts or part of the problem that you are seeking to address
 - *“Legal/Illegal” vs “Good/bad”*
 - *“Healthy/Unhealthy” vs “Clean/Dirty”*
 - *“Centered” vs “Targeted”*

Prevention Best Practice

- **ALWAYS** consider your audience
- **“Something is better than nothing” is not always true**
 - Avoid “one-off” events or piecemeal approaches
- **Primary prevention work does not have to be substance specific** (and often times it shouldn't be!)
- **Feelings ≠ Facts**
 - What data are you using (or not) to help confirm the way you or others feel and does it tell the whole story?
- **Good intentions don't always yield good results**
 - Prevention efforts should always be driven by the population(s) you are seeking to support and grounded in well established and effective practice

Prevention Programing Considerations

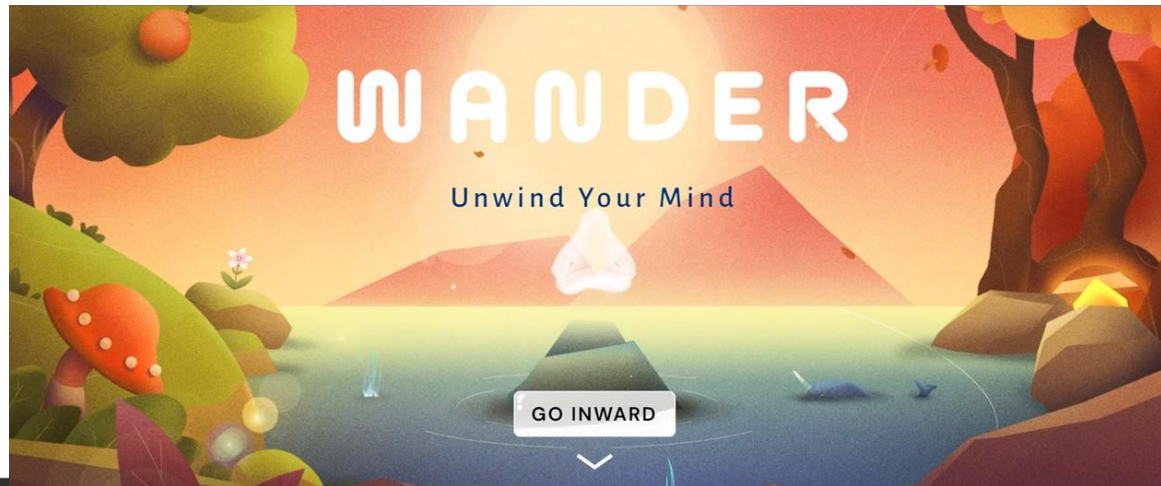
- ✓ Take the time to develop a thoughtful plan
- ✓ Use that plan to guide your work over time
- ✓ Work within your capacity
- ✓ Quality over quantity
- ✓ Use both data and evidence informed approaches
- ✓ Maintain as much fidelity as possible
- ✓ It's not about *what* you are doing as much as it is about *why* you are doing it, *who* you are doing it with, and *how* you are effecting change over time

BSAS/DPH/Other Resources

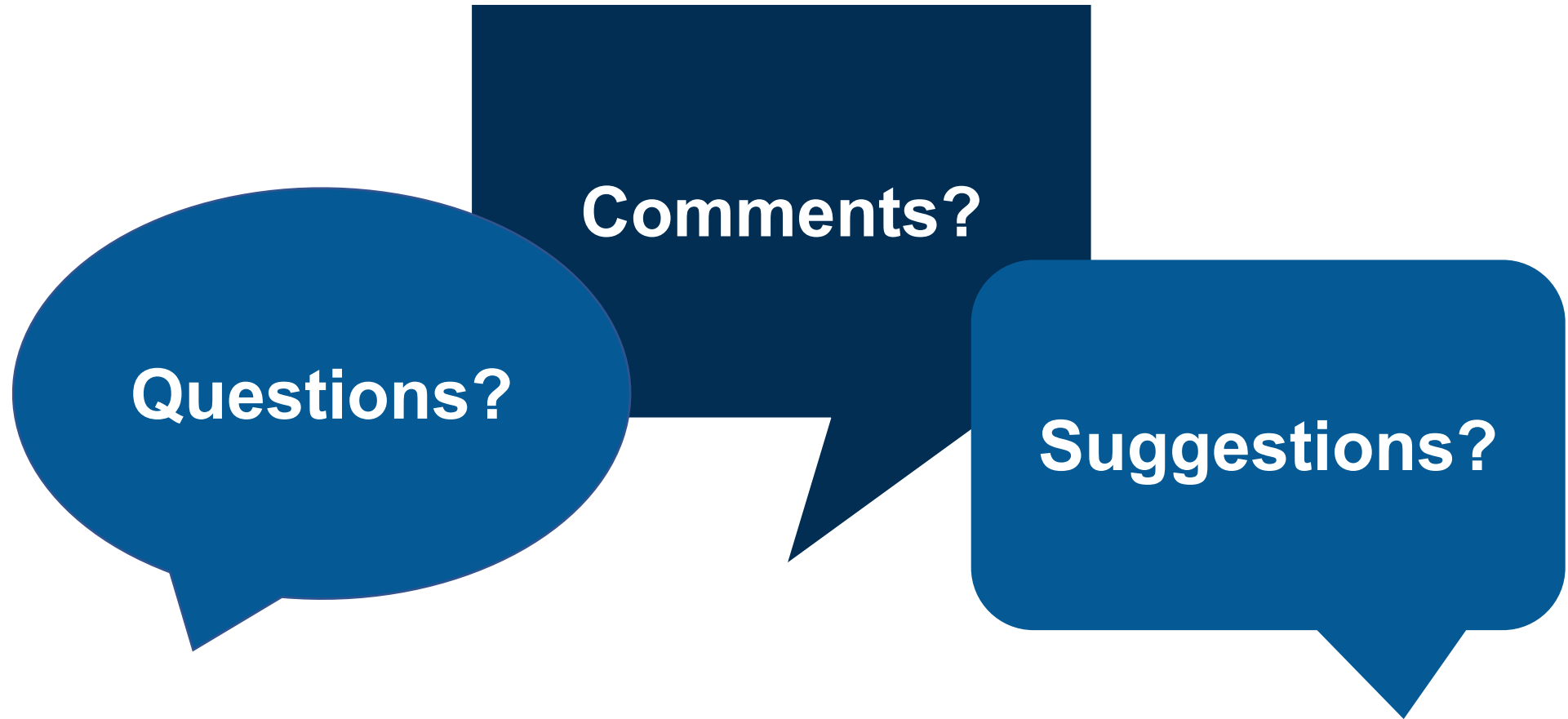
- [Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse](#)
- [Careers of Substance](#)
- [Center for Strategic Prevention Support](#)
- [MA Substance Use Helpline](#)
- [Prevention Technology Transfer Center](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)

The World of Wander

<https://www.wander.mass.gov/>



Thank You



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